

Message Text

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ORIGIN CPR-02

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY PORT OF SPAIN

UNCLAS STATE 159252

E.O.11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR

SUBJECT: PRIVILEGES AND IMMUNITIES: TRAFFIC TICKETS

1. TRAFFIC TICKETS ARE ISSUED TO RESIDENT DIPLOMATS IN WASHINGTON AREA, PARTICULARLY FOR ILLEGAL PARKING, AND NO EXCEPTIONAL TREATMENT IS EXTENDED AS A MATTER OF OFFICIAL POLICE DEPT. POLICY. PROTOCOL HAS INFORMALLY RAISED WITH D.C. METROPOLITAN POLICE DEPARTMENT POSSIBILITY OF HAVING ILLEGAL PARKING OF DPL-TAGGED CARS IN IMMEDIATE VICINITY OF EMBASSIES OVERLOOKED BY POLICEMEN ON BEAT, BUT RESPONSE WAS NEGATIVE, WITH COMMENT THAT DIPLOMATS NEEDN'T WORRY,

THEY HAVE IMMUNITY. IN PRACTICE DISTRICT GOVERNMENT HONORS IMMUNITY BY NOT PURSUING UNPAID TICKETS ISSUED TO PRIVILEGED PERSONNEL. SOME EMBASSIES, IT SHOULD BE NOTED, EXPECT OR REQUIRE MEMBERS TO PAY TICKETS. WHEN NECESSARY IN INDIVIDUAL CASES PROTOCOL CITES IMMUNITY TO THE COURT.

2. IN VIEW OF DUTY OF DIPLOMATIC MISSION PERSONNEL UNDER ARTICLE 41 OF VIENNA CONVENTION ON DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS TO RESPECT LAWS AND REGULATIONS OF RECEIVING STATE, DEPARTMENT WOULD ADVISE AGAINST EMBASSY'S JOINING IN ANY COLLECTIVE EFFORT OF DIPLOMATIC CORPS TO DISSUADE GOTT FROM INSTITUT-
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ING PLANNED SYSTEM OF ISSUING TRAFFIC TICKETS FOR AUTO

VIOLATIONS. TO DO SO MIGHT BE CONSTRUED AS A DENIAL BY

DIPLOMATIC PERSONNEL THAT THEY ARE EXPECTED TO OBSERVE
LOCAL TRAFFIC LAWS. AT SAME TIME IT WOULD SEEM APPROPRIATE
TO OBTAIN FROM FOREIGN OFFICE ASSURANCE THAT NEW SYSTEM
IMPLIES NO ABRIDGMENT OF IMMUNITIES GUARANTEED UNDER
INTERNATIONAL LAW.

3. EMBASSY PERSONNEL SHOULD OF COURSE SEEK TO AVOID ANY
VIOLATION OF TRAFFIC LAWS WHICH COULD LEAD TO ISSUANCE
OF TICKETS. KISSINGER

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